

# INDIANAPOLIS VETERAN'S COURT MENTOR PROGRAM OUTLINE AND APPLICATION PACKET





## **INDIANAPOLIS VETERANS COURT**

### **THE VETERAN MENTOR PROGRAM**

#### **IVC MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Indianapolis Veteran's Court (IVC) is to support the veteran through adjustment to civilian life; to assist the veteran to navigate the court, treatment, VA systems; and to act as an advocate through this difficult time of restoration with mentorship and accountability.

#### **VOLUNTEER VETERAN MENTORS**

The role of the Volunteer Veteran Mentor is to act as a coach, guide, role model, advocate, and a support for the individual with whom he or she is working. A Veterans Mentor is intended to encourage, guide, and support the participant as he or she progresses through the court process. This will include listening to concerns and making suggestions, assisting the participant, determining needs, reminding the participant of his or her responsibilities in civilian life and to the court, and to provide support in a way that only another veteran would understand.

Submit completed applications to: **Gordon Smith, Mentor Coordinator**  
**Gordon.Smith@indy.gov or (317) 327-1010**

#### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Attend a court session at least once a month.
2. Dedicate at least one hour a week of time for mentoring to the Veteran participant.
3. Commit to participate for at least one year or until the veteran participant has graduated.
4. Participate in and lead mentoring sessions with veterans who are participating in the IVC Program.
5. Support veterans in identifying and addressing difficulties.
6. Adhere to all of the IVC policies and procedures.
7. Assist the participants as much as possible to resolve their concerns with court procedures and interactions with the VA system.
8. Support and assist other Mentors in the program.

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#### **TRAINING**

All Mentors must complete the required training. This will include:

- Complete the online training program

- Observe several court sessions

- Shadow three mentoring sessions with three different mentors

- Complete the mandatory confidentiality worksheet

- Lead three mentoring sessions while being observed

- Learn how to conduct mentoring sessions and complete mentor logs

- Complete individual supervision with the Mentor Coordinator

#### **ASSIGNMENTS**

The Mentor Coordinator will match mentors and participating veterans at each court appearance. Mentors will not always be present at each court session, the Mentor Coordinator will match the available mentors with the veteran participant in need. Whenever possible, the Mentor Coordinator will make matches based on the following criteria:

- Previous sessions where the mentor and participant were matched

- Matching branch of service

- Specific skill of a mentor matched to the need of the mentee

- Similar age, gender, ethnicity, and military experience

#### **RECORD KEEPING**

Each contact between mentor and participant is to be documented in the Veterans Mentoring Log at each court appearance by the mentor.

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#### **SCREENING POLICY**

Each prospective mentor must complete a screening process conducted by the IVC . The decision to accept or deny an applicant will be made by the Mentor Coordinator and the Judge. Feedback regarding the mentor applicant's denial to be a mentor may or may not be given. The decision to provide or withhold feedback is solely at the discretion of the IVC Mentor Coordinator and the Judge.

The Volunteer Mentor screening includes, but is not limited to:

- \* Completing a written application
- \* Completing a personal interview
- \* Completing a background check

#### **KNOWLEDGE OF A PROSPECTIVE MENTOR'S NEGATIVE HISTORY**

Current Veteran Mentors with knowledge that a prospective mentor has a negative history or background must communicate his or her knowledge or concerns to the IVC Mentor Coordinator, the , or the Judge. Withholding this information may jeopardize the integrity of the IVC Mentor Program, the court, and the veteran participants.

#### **UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR**

Unacceptable behaviors will not be tolerated while a veteran mentor is participating in the program. Because of the direct impact a mentor has on a veteran participant, behaviors that are not aligned with the mission, vision, goals, and values of the IVC are unacceptable and prohibited. Unacceptable behavior, criminal conduct, dishonesty, or failing to report violations or dangerous behavior may result in removal from the mentoring program.

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**THE VETERAN MENTOR APPLICATION**

**Personal Information**

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Last Name:\_\_\_\_\_ First name:\_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

Address:\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address:\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home\_\_\_\_\_ Work\_\_\_\_\_ Cell\_\_\_\_\_

**Military Experience**

Branch of Service: ARMY USMC NAVY AIR FORCE COAST GUARD ( Circle One )

ACTIVE NATIONAL GUARD RESERVE RETIRED ( Circle One )

Length of Service:\_\_\_\_\_

Rank:\_\_\_\_\_

MOS/AFSC/NEC:\_\_\_\_\_

Have you served in a combat zone? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, Where? When? How long?\_\_\_\_\_

Current Employer and Work Hours:\_\_\_\_\_

Estimated time available each month to Mentor:\_\_\_\_\_

What does being a Mentor mean to you?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What motivated you to want to participate in the Indianapolis Veterans Court Mentoring Program?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you Volunteered before? Yes/No Where?\_\_\_\_\_ When?\_\_\_\_\_

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#### References

Provide the name and phone number or email address of three non-family references and their relationship to you.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Criminal History

Have you ever been arrested and/or convicted of a crime? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what was the date and charge?

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you currently serving a sentence for a criminal conviction? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what is your sentence? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any pending criminal charges? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what charge(s)?

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Emergency Contact Information

Give two emergency contacts and their phone numbers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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#### **Rules for the Mentors**

- Act on the Veteran's interest unless to do so would endanger him/herself or others.
- Act professionally when representing the program and the sponsoring agencies in the community.
- Refer the Veteran to other agencies / organizations only after obtaining approval from the Mentor Coordinator.
- Work with the Mentor Coordinator to resolve conflicts.
- Confine your role to the limits of your training and competency.
- Maintain objective and professional standards in relationship with the Veteran.
- Do not promise better outcomes than can reasonably be expected.
- Do not exploit the Veteran or the relationship for agency or personal advantage.
- Do not become involved in any monetary business arrangements or commitments beyond those required for delivery of services or any other type of solicitation.
- Sexual relations or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. Any report of inappropriate behavior will be investigated and legal action may be initiated.
- Verbal abuse, physical abuse, or violence will not be tolerated. Violence or abuse must be reported to the Mentor Coordinator immediately.
- **Protect all information concerning the Veteran as CONFIDENTIAL.** Only give personal information regarding the Veteran to people the Veteran has identified on a signed release form.
- Encourage the Veteran to report knowledge of crimes or planned crimes to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.
- Inform the Veteran that you are obligated to report certain illegal or destructive behavior to the Mentor Coordinator or probation officers at the discretion of the Mentor.

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#### **Rules for the Mentors Continued**

- In emergency situations, contact the mental health crisis team or police and then the Mentor Coordinator. If you are unsure whether to take action, consult with the Mentor Coordinator. Only disclose information relevant to the situation.

***I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME:***

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VETERAN MENTOR SIGNATURE

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DATE

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MENTOR COORDINATOR SIGNATURE

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DATE

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#### **Record-Keeping Policy**

Each contact between mentor and mentee is documented in the Veterans Mentoring log which will be updated at each court appearance by the mentor and a copy provided to the Mentor Coordinator at the end of each month. In addition guidelines will be reviewed specific to what information should be included and should not be included in the veteran log as well as how information about the mentors will be protected.

***I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME:***

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VETERAN MENTOR SIGNATURE

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DATE

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MENTOR COORDINATOR SIGNATURE

---

DATE

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#### **Confidentiality Policy**

Mentors training will include a mandatory confidentiality workshop. Instructions on Federal and State confidentiality policy will be reviewed including but not limited to: what information should be kept confidential, who has access to confidential materials, what confidential information can be used for, how it will be kept confidential, and the limits of confidentiality.

In addition guidelines will be reviewed specific to what information should be included and should not be included in the veteran log as well as how information about the mentors will be protected.

***I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME:***

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VETERAN MENTOR SIGNATURE

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DATE

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MENTOR COORDINATOR SIGNATURE

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DATE

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#### Criminal Background Check Permission Form – Mentor Volunteer

Please type or print legibly name as it appears on your driver's license.

FIRST FULL MIDDLE LAST \_\_\_\_\_

Female

DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please provide details of all convictions and locations of all convictions (A yes answer will not necessarily disqualify you from employment).

RESIDENCES: Please list residences in the last 10 years

State City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ Years: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

State City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ Years: \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

#### INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORIZATION

Criminal background checks are conducted on volunteers. I authorize the Indianapolis Veterans Court to conduct such a check. I release the Indianapolis Veterans Court and its employees from any claims arising out of a criminal background check if a determination is made that a person may not serve as a volunteer due to the criminal background check.

#### I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME:

\_\_\_\_\_  
VETERAN MENTOR SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
MENTOR COORDINATOR SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

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#### **The National Clearinghouse for Veterans Treatment Courts at the National Association of Drug Court Professionals**

#### **The Ten Key Components of Veterans Treatment Court**

In 2008, The Buffalo Veterans Treatment Court adopted with slight modifications the essential tenements of the U.S. Department of Justice Publication entitled “Defining Drug Courts: The Key Components”, (Jan.1997). There are key differences between Drug Courts, Mental Health Courts, and Veterans Treatment Courts. These Key Components provide the foundation for the successful operation of a Veterans Treatment Court.

**Key Component #1:** Veterans Treatment Court integrate alcohol, drug treatment, and mental health services with justice system case processing

Veterans Treatment Courts promote sobriety, recovery and stability through a coordinated response to veteran’s dependency on alcohol, drugs, and/or management of their mental illness. Realization of these goals requires a team approach. This approach includes the cooperation and collaboration of the traditional partners found in drug treatment courts and mental health treatment courts with the addition of the Veteran Administration Health Care Network, veterans and veterans family support organizations, and veteran volunteer mentors.

**Key Component #2:** Using a nonadversarial approach, prosecution and defense counsel promote public safety while protecting participants' due process rights

To facilitate the veterans’ progress in treatment, the prosecutor and defense counsel shed their traditional adversarial courtroom relationship and work together as a team. Once a veteran is accepted into the treatment court program, the team’s focus is on the veteran’s recovery and law-abiding behavior—not on the merits of the pending case.

**Key Component #3:** Eligible participants are identified early and promptly placed in the Veterans Treatment Court program

Early identification of veterans entering the criminal justice system is an integral part of the process of placement in the Veterans Treatment Court program. Arrest can be a traumatic event in a person’s life. It creates an immediate crisis and can compel recognition of inappropriate behavior into the open, making denial by the veteran for the need for treatment difficult.

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**Key Component #4:** Veterans Treatment Court provide access to a continuum of alcohol, drug, mental health and other related treatment and rehabilitation services

While primarily concerned with criminal activity, AOD use, and mental illness, the Veterans Treatment Court team also consider co-occurring problems such as primary medical problems, transmittable diseases, homelessness; basic educational deficits, unemployment and poor job preparation; spouse and family troubles—especially domestic violence—and the ongoing effects of war time trauma.

Veteran peer mentors are essential to the Veterans Treatment Court team. Ongoing veteran peer mentors interaction with the Veterans Treatment Court participants is essential. Their active, supportive relationship, maintained throughout treatment, increases the likelihood that a veteran will remain in treatment and improves the chances for sobriety and law-abiding behavior.

**Key Component #5:** Abstinence is monitored by frequent alcohol and other drug testing

Frequent court-ordered AOD testing is essential. An accurate testing program is the most objective and efficient way to establish a framework for accountability and to gauge each participant's progress.

**Key Component #6:** A coordinated strategy governs Veterans Treatment Court responses to participants' compliance

A veteran's progress through the treatment court experience is measured by his or her compliance with the treatment regimen. Veterans Treatment Court reward cooperation as well as respond to noncompliance. Veterans Treatment Court establishes a coordinated strategy, including a continuum of graduated responses, to continuing drug use and other noncompliant behavior.

**Key Component #7:** Ongoing judicial interaction with each Veteran is essential

The judge is the leader of the Veterans Treatment Court team. This active, supervising relationship, maintained throughout treatment, increases the likelihood that a veteran will remain in treatment and improves the chances for sobriety and law-abiding behavior. Ongoing judicial supervision also communicates to veterans that someone in authority cares about them and is closely watching what they do.

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**Key Component #8:** Monitoring and evaluation measure the achievement of program goals and gauge effectiveness

Management and monitoring systems provide timely and accurate information about program progress. Program monitoring provides oversight and periodic measurements of the program's performance against its stated goals and objectives. Information and conclusions developed from periodic monitoring reports, process evaluation activities, and longitudinal evaluation studies may be used to modify program

**Key Component #9:** Continuing interdisciplinary education promotes effective Veterans Treatment Court planning, implementation, and operations

All Veterans Treatment Court staff should be involved in education and training. Interdisciplinary education exposes criminal justice officials to veteran treatment issues, and Veteran Administration, veteran volunteer mentors, and treatment staff to criminal justice issues. It also develops shared understandings of the values, goals, and operating procedures of both the veteran administration, treatment and the justice system components.

Education and training programs help maintain a high level of professionalism, provide a forum for solidifying relationships among criminal justice, Veteran Administration, veteran volunteer mentors, and treatment personnel, and promote a spirit of commitment and collaboration.

**Key Component #10:** Forging partnerships among Veterans Treatment Court, Veterans Administration, public agencies, and community-based organizations generates local support and enhances Veteran Treatment Court effectiveness

Because of its unique position in the criminal justice system, Veterans Treatment Court is well suited to develop coalitions among private community-based organizations, public criminal justice agencies, the Veteran Administration, veterans and veterans families support organizations, and AOD and mental health treatment delivery systems. Forming such coalitions expands the continuum of services available to Veterans Treatment Court participants and informs the community about Veterans Treatment Court concepts. The Veterans Treatment Court fosters system wide involvement through its commitment to share responsibility and participation of program partners.

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# Mentor Corps Oath



I \_\_\_\_\_

( Name )

am forever conscious of each veteran under my charge, and by example will inspire him or her to the highest standard possible.

I will strive to reintegrate my veteran back into the community.

I will live by the credo “leave no veteran behind” and will give them the support only I, a veteran can give.

I will never forget that I am responsible to my fellow veterans, the Veterans Treatment Court program and the law.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Judge David Certo

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mentor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date